asked him more directly than usual. I said afterwards I'd take him to dinner in Chinatown.

I think he felt that if he didn't let me, it would spoil our day. I remember him standing still in the middle of my dilapidated kitchen, with the ceiling flaking and the tiles lifting because of the dampness from the leaky roof. He'd was wearing a blue jacket and he'd already put on his knapsack. He turned his back to me, but I didn't want to rub it through several layers of material. He removed the jacket so I could at least rub his neck and the tops of his shoulders. He was smooth. He smelled like the soap he'd showered with that morning. I think it was "Irish Spring."

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Joe started coming around. I wouldn't say regularly, but once every two or three weeks. I relaxed about letting him enter the House. I didn't have much choice, since Adam usually answered the door and invited him inside.

I told Adam about Joe and me, and the store. He said he thought Joe needed a swift kick in the ass. Then, more tenderly, he asked me if Joe had sought any kind of help. I said I thought Joe had exhausted all the help. Adam thought he would still be eligible for welfare. He'd been a social worker all his life, whereas I'd been virtually a client all of mine. He naturally had more confidence in the "social